

The Grand Challenge

A Competition to Promote Forward-Thinking and Leadership in Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture and Forestry, and Other Institutions of Higher Learning

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), in cooperation with the 25x'25 Alliance, is pleased to announce The Grand Challenge which is intended to support academic institutions as they assume leadership in achieving solutions to issues associated with energy supply and consumption. The competition provides an opportunity for agricultural and forestry colleges and other institutions of higher learning to share their visions of how they will contribute to achieving the goal of the 25x'25 Alliance:

“By the year 2025, America’s farms, ranches and forests will provide 25 percent of the total energy consumed in the United States, while continuing to produce safe, abundant and affordable food, feed and fiber.”

Institutions should present their vision of U.S. agriculture and /or forestry’s contribution to the energy economy in 2017, the roles they intend to create for themselves in that environment, and how those roles will contribute to meeting the 25x'25 goal through achievements in four areas:

- Increasing the production of renewable energy and alternative fuels;
- Delivering that energy to consumers;
- Meeting consumer demand; and
- Enhancing sustainability, conservation and energy efficiency

Sponsors: The Research, Education, and Economics (REE) mission area of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (<http://www.ree.usda.gov>) and the 25x'25 Alliance (<http://www.25x25.org>), a broad alliance of agricultural, energy, environmental, business and labor groups.

Eligibility: All accredited agricultural and forestry colleges and other institutions of higher learning are eligible to participate.

Judging: Fifteen winners will be invited to present their visions during the REE Bio Energy Awareness Days II in Washington, DC, on June 19 - 22, 2008. Specifically, the winners will have the opportunity to exhibit at the Whitten Building site for BEAD II, June 19 and 20, with a reception honoring them from 3:00 to 5:00 pm on June 20, 2008. These fifteen will include up to two winners from each of the four USDA geographic regions, two winners from the 1890 land-grant colleges, and five ‘at-large’ winners that can be from any eligible college or university. Participants will be judged on the basis of a paper, not to exceed 10 pages, outlining their vision. A team of judges from REE and the 25x25 Alliance will judge these papers. The winners’ presentations in Washington, DC can incorporate any combination of media (print, audio, video, etc.) that can be presented in a 4 x 8 x 8 foot display space.

The vision presented should demonstrate leadership, diversity, creativity, and innovation. If there are cooperative avenues for fulfilling this mission, whether within the universities and colleges (e.g. interdisciplinary programs) or collaborations among colleges and universities, they should be addressed.

The papers will be evaluated utilizing the following criteria:

- Vision of agriculture's contribution to the energy economy in 2017 (30 points)
- Vision of how the institution will fit into the energy economy in 2017 (20 points)
- Vision of the institution's role in achieving the 25x'25 goal through:
 - Research (10 points)
 - Extension (10 points)
 - Education (10 points)
- Vision of transformational processes required to meet the 25x'25 goal (20 points)

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| Schedule: | Extended to April 30, 2008 | Submission of 10 page papers |
| | May 8, 2008 | Announcement of fifteen winners |
| | June 19-20, 2008 | Presentation of Vision at Bio Energy Awareness Day II |

Rules: For a complete set of competition rules and guidelines for the monograph and presentation, or to submit inquiries, you may contact Joseph A. Dunn at jadunn@csrees.usda.gov or visit the BEAD II web page (*forthcoming*).

Recommended Reading: REE's Research, Education, and Extension Strategic Energy Plan, (<http://www.ree.usda.gov>), the 25x'25 Action Plan (<http://www.25x25.org>), the announcement for the REE Bio-Energy Awareness Day II (*forthcoming*).

To indicate your interest in participating, or for further information please contact:

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Sincerely,

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